

Annual Report FY 1999



Judicial Council of Georgia
Administrative Office of the Courts

Judicial Council of Georgia/Administrative Office of the Courts

July 1, 1998 to June 30, 1999

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Judicial Council of Georgia

June 1999

Chief Justice Robert Benham
Supreme Court

Presiding Justice Norman S. Fletcher
Supreme Court

Chief Judge Edward H. Johnson
Court of Appeals

Judge G. Alan Blackburn
Court of Appeals

Judge Joe C. Bishop
Council of Superior Court Judges
Dawson

Judge Donny Peppers
Council of State Court Judges
LaFayette

Judge Orion L Douglass
Council of State Court Judges
Brunswick

Judge Cliff Jolliff
Council of Juvenile Court Judges
Gainesville

Judge R. Michael Key
Council of Juvenile Court Judges
LaGrange

Judge Helen W. Harper
Council of Probate Court Judges
Dublin

Judge William J. Self, II
Council of Probate Court Judges
Macon

Judge Joseph Iannazzone
Council of Magistrate Court Judges
Lawrenceville

Judge T.O. Sturdivant, III
Council of Magistrate Court Judges
Marietta

Judge Charles B. Mikell, Jr.
First District Administrative Judge
Savannah

Judge H. Arthur McLane
Second District Administrative Judge
Valdosta

Sr. Judge E. Mullins Whisnant
Third District Administrative Judge
Columbus

Judge Robert J. Castellani
Fourth District Administrative Judge
Decatur

Judge Thelma Wyatt Cummings Moore
Fifth District Administrative Judge
Atlanta

Judge William F. Lee, Jr.
Sixth District Administrative Judge
Newnan

Judge William T. Boyett
Seventh District Administrative Judge
Dalton

Judge Walter C. McMillan, Jr.
Eighth District Administrative Judge
Sandersville

Judge John E. Girardeau
Ninth District Administrative Judge
Gainesville

Judge T. Penn McWhorter
Tenth District Administrative Judge
Winder



Photographs Preceding Page: From top left: Judge T.O. Sturdivant, III, Chief Magistrate of Cobb County, addresses the Judicial Council, December 11, 1998; Henry County Courthouse, McDonough, Georgia; Chief Justice Robert Benham (center) announces Judicial Council grants for legal services to victims of domestic violence.

Judicial Council of Georgia

The Judicial Council develops policies for administering and improving the Georgia courts. The state legislature created the Council in 1973 and it was officially designated an administrative arm of the Supreme Court of Georgia in 1978. Judges of the appellate and trial courts serve two-year terms on the Council. The Chief Justice and Presiding Justice of the Supreme Court act as the chair and vice chair of the twenty-four member body.

JUDGESHIP RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council met in December 1998 to consider requests for new superior court judgeships. Based on caseload data for the 47 superior court circuits and analysis prepared by the Administrative Office of the Courts, the Judicial Council approved requests for new judgeships in the Southwestern and Northeastern circuits. In considering judgeship requests, the Judicial Council seeks to maintain a balance in caseload distribution in each circuit. Not only is caseload data made available, but also circuit demographics, number of jury trials, number of open cases, and days of senior judge assistance.

Judgeship requests approved by the Council are sent to the General Assembly where enabling legislation may be introduced. During the 1999 session, the two recommended judgeships gained approval. The new superior court judges will be appointed by the Governor and take office after July 1, 1999.

The Council also recommended creation of a new judicial circuit from the four-county Flint Circuit. This proposal places Butts, Monroe and Lamar counties in the Towaliga Circuit, leaving only Henry County in the Flint Circuit. The Council's recommendation gained approval in the General Assembly and the new circuit comes into existence on July 1, 1999.

At the June 1999 meeting, the Judicial Council voted to revise the annual caseload schedule so that circuit data could be made available in August each year. The change allows more time to discuss proposed judgeships with legislators and to draft enabling legislation. The new schedule takes effect in 2000.

COUNCIL PROJECTS

Judicial Council committees develop projects ranging from researching trial court unification issues and devising materials to assist pro se litigants to establishing grants for legal services to victims of domestic violence. Family court projects and courts automation initiatives are reviewed by the Council.

Photographs Facing Page: From left, Historic Fayette County Courthouse, Fayetteville, Georgia; Judge G. Bryant Culpepper of the Macon Judicial Circuit reports for the Child Placement Project at the December 1998 Judicial Council meeting; Governor Roy Barnes swears in Mr. George (Buddy) Darden, Chair of the Judicial Nominating Commission, Attorney General Thurbert Baker was sworn in as a member of the commission.



Administrative Office of the Courts

The Administrative Office of the Courts serves and supports the Judicial Council and the Georgia judicial system. Through collaborative efforts with judges, court administrators, clerks of court and others, the AOC seeks to enhance the administration of justice. Collection and analysis of annual caseload data for the trial courts is a principal function. The agency also assists judicial policy-making groups and consults on court special projects.

The work of the AOC is carried out by five divisions: Research, Communications, Fiscal, Grants & Outreach, and Judicial Liaison. Oversight of the Board of Court Reporting is the responsibility of the Judicial Council/AOC. The Family Violence Commission and the County and Municipal Probation Advisory Council are also affiliated with the agency.

RESEARCH

The Research and Court Services division compiles caseload data for the Supreme Court of Georgia, Court of Appeals, superior, state, juvenile, probate and magistrate courts. Reports of court caseloads are published annually. In addition to the annual judgeship study for the superior courts, the research staff prepares circuit boundary studies, pilot court evaluations and court personnel compensation surveys. The division handles all records and jury management inquiries and provides staff to the Judicial Council's Pro Se Litigants Committee.

COMMUNICATIONS

The AOC coordinates media relations and information releases on Judicial Council activities and receives inquiries from the press and the public. Up-to-date judicial branch information is published in the *Annual Report*. The *Georgia Courts Directory* is also published annually. A brochure entitled *Your Guide to the Georgia Courts* is widely distributed.

The *Georgia Courts Journal* is a source of court-related information published quarterly by the AOC. The *Journal* is sent to all judges, clerks of court, law schools, federal judges, and state officials. During the legislative session the agency produces the *Judicial Legislative Log* each week to track court-related legislation as it is introduced and acted on by the General Assembly.

FISCAL SERVICES

The Financial Administration Division provides an integrated program of budget planning, accounting, asset management, contract/grant management, and payroll maintenance for the judicial branch. It also provides accurate and timely financial data to the judicial, legislative, and executive branches as well as other constituents. The division is made up of three units: Budget, Accounting, and Personnel.

The Budget Unit. The Budget Unit prepares and presents state judicial budgets, monitors budget performance of judiciary programs and the AOC, distributes funding to the courts consistent with allocations determined by the Legislature and maintains fiscal reports on the courts.

The Accounting Unit. The Accounting Unit maintains fiscal records for the following judicial groups: Judicial Council, Council of Juvenile Court Judges, Council of Superior Court Judges, Institute of Continuing Judicial Education, Judicial Administrative Districts, Judicial Qualifications Commission, Georgia Office of Dispute Resolution, Indigent Defense Council, and Georgia Courts Automation Commission.

The Accounting Unit processes vendor invoices, travel claims, court fee revenues, and grant reimbursements for all of these groups. It monitors expenditures and produces expenditure reports to assist with budget planning and to ensure that expenditures are consistent with Generally Accepted Accounting Procedures (GAAP).

The Personnel Unit. The Personnel Unit maintains employee records, processes personnel action request forms, manages payroll adjustments and disbursements, and assists employees with all changes relating to flexible benefits.

Grants and Outreach GRANTS AND OUTREACH

A new effort was started to actively pursue grant funds to supplement or initiate court-supported projects. Grants for special research projects, educational materials, court technology and other court improvements were pursued in FY 1999. Staff also manages Judicial Council grant funds disbursed to agencies for provision of civil legal services for victims of domestic violence in Georgia.

Judicial Liaison JUDICIAL LIAISON

The professional staff of the Judicial Liaison division assists magistrate, probate, and municipal court judges in their work by planning and coordinating meetings, maintaining training and certification records, publishing newsletters, monitoring legislation and assisting with annual updates for benchbooks and handbooks. The agency serves as secretariat for the Probate Judges Training Council, the Georgia Magistrate Courts Training Council and the Municipal Courts Training Council. The training councils design training seminars for judges along with ICJE and oversee annual training certification for these judges. Administrative functions for the Council of Probate Court Judges, Council of Magistrate Court Judges, Council of Municipal Court Judges are handled by the Judicial Liaison division.

Administrative Office of the Courts

Judicial Liaison

COUNCIL OF PROBATE COURT JUDGES

The Council of Probate Court Judges (OCGA §15-9-15) was created to further improvement of the probate courts and the administration of justice. The council develops uniform rules and forms, the probate benchbook, and handbook, and other publications to assist probate judges in carrying out their duties.

Council policy is set by an executive committee comprised of the president, president-elect, first vice president, secretary-treasurer, and chairs of the standing committees.

The council met two times during fiscal year 1999. One meeting was held jointly with the County Officers Association of Georgia (COAG). Judicial training at each meeting was planned by the Probate Judges Training Council. The Institute of Continuing Judicial Education assisted with the spring and fall seminars. The Executive Committee meets five times a year to conduct business on behalf of the Council. A fall retreat was held in September in Greene County where committees met and the legislative agenda for the 1999 session was developed. The training council also sponsored training sessions for probate court clerks. Judges who taught at these sessions received credit toward their mandatory continuing education requirements.

Also during FY 1999, the council produced a supplement to the second edition of the *Handbook for Probate Judges* and contracted for revision of the Probate Judges Benchbook. A Handbook for Guardians was developed and distributed to judges and attorneys. Standard probate court forms were made available on computer disk. The council also funded a Spanish version of their videos on guardianships of adults and children.

A cooperative effort with the Georgia Tech Research Institute was continued to maintain the council's website. Probate court standard forms, the handbook for *Duties of Personal Representatives of Decedents' Estates in Georgia*, and the *Handbook for Guardians* were made available on the Internet. The standard forms can be downloaded or may be used for on-line filing. Probate courts will be given assistance in creating their web pages, with direct links to the council's website.

Judicial Liaison

COUNCIL OF MAGISTRATE COURT JUDGES

The Council of Magistrate Court Judges (OCGA §15-10-7), created to further improvement of the magistrate courts and the administration of justice, assists magistrates throughout the state in execution of their duties and assists in their training.

All chief magistrates and magistrates in Georgia are members of the council. The 28 member executive committee is comprised of six officers, two representatives from each of the ten judicial administrative districts and two members-at-large. The committee carries out the administrative duties of the council.

The council held four meetings during the year to conduct business and training. Topics included: legal research, mock trials, do's and don'ts of holding preliminary hearings, landlord/tenant matters, personal property foreclosure, and theft by conversion. Meetings usually feature a luncheon speaker and provide a forum for judges to discuss common problems and experiences. At the January meeting, the council sponsored a breakfast for legislators.

In addition, the Georgia Magistrate Courts Newsletter was published quarterly. Plans to publish a pictorial directory were postponed.

The Executive Committee of the Council of Magistrate Court Judges met in September to develop a priority agenda for the year as follows:

- Focus on establishing a retirement system for magistrates;
- Increase criminal jurisdiction in certain misdemeanor cases;
- Accept proposal to increase civil jurisdiction to \$15,000;
- Clarification of salary matters;
- Promote legislation to allow superior court judges to appoint magistrates to set bonds on a wider array of offenses;
- Promote attendance at MCTC and quarterly meetings;
- Develop uniform forms;
- Assist 10 Magistrate Courts with their automation needs;
- Develop a Magistrate Bulletin Board on the Internet;
- Promote extension of probation period for county ordinance violations to six months;
- Promote meetings of membership at the district level;
- Review and make any needed changes in the law regarding senior judges.

Administrative Office of the Courts

Judicial Division

GEORGIA MAGISTRATE COURTS TRAINING COUNCIL

The Georgia Magistrate Courts Training Council (OCGA §15-10-132) supervises continuing judicial education requirements for magistrate court judges, prescribes minimum standards for magistrate training curricula and establishes the criteria for magistrate certification. The council approves instructor qualifications and issues training certification to chief magistrates and magistrates who satisfactorily comply with mandatory continuing judicial education requirements. Members of the training council are appointed by the president of the Council of Magistrate Court Judges to two-year terms. The director of the AOC or a designee serves as non-voting secretary.

Nonlawyer magistrates who are newly-elected or appointed must attend 40 hours of civil and 40 hours of criminal training within two years after assuming office. All magistrates must participate in a prescribed mentoring program during their first year in office. To maintain certified status, all magistrates (including those who are members of the State Bar of Georgia) must fulfill an annual 20-hour recertification training requirement.

In calendar year 1999, the training council sponsored two 40-hour seminars covering civil and criminal matters. Magistrates needing recertification training may attend part of a 40-hour

Magistrate Training Opportunities

Feb. 17-19, 1999
Chief Magistrate Specialty Course – 20-hr.
Columbus, GA (38 attended, 30 certified)

March 17-19, 1999
Judging & Humanities Immersion – 20-hr.
Athens, GA (10 attended, 10 certified)

March 21-26, 1999
Basic Certification Civil – 40-hr.
Athens, GA (48 attended, 46 certified)

June 9-11, 1999
Judicial Use of Computers – 20-hr.
Athens, GA (12 attended, 11 certified)

June 14-16, 1999
Fact-Finding Leading to Judicial
Decision-Making – 20-hr.
Macon, GA (48 attended, 43 certified)

July 21-23, 1999
Specialty Course on Landlord/Tenant Law – 20-hr.
Mableton, GA (53 attended, 52 certified)

August 4-6, 1999
Survey Update Recertification – 20-hr.
Savannah, GA (145 attended, 145 certified)

August 4-6, 1999
Specialty Course on Judicial Ethics – 20-hr.
Savannah, GA (24 attended, 24 certified)

August 25-27, 1999
Survey Update Recertification – 20-hr.
Marietta, GA (48 attended, 48 certified)

September 12-17, 1999
Basic Certification Civil – 40-hr.
Athens, GA (50 attended, 50 certified)

October 27-29, 1999
Specialty Course on
Domestic Violence – 20-hr.
St. Simons Island (45 attended, 45 certified)

program to fulfill the 20 hour requirement. Two 20-hour recertification programs were also held and five specialty courses were offered: Domestic Violence; Judging and the Humanities; Judicial Use of Computers; Judicial Ethics and Professionalism; and Fact-Finding and Decision-Making. The council also sponsored training for magistrate court clerks and secretaries.

Judges may obtain recertification credit of up to four hours per year by attending training at the Council of Magistrate Court Judges quarterly meetings.

The council held three meetings in calendar year 1999. Decisions made during these meetings included revising the council's bylaws, authorizing the purchase of a digital camera for the newsletter editor, purchasing new computer equipment for Crisp County to continue testing and upgrading the Fee and Fine Accounting System, adopting a policy allowing magistrates to receive up to six hours of credit for compatible training given to municipal court judges, and waiving tuition for certification training for senior magistrates.

The following publications were distributed: the Magistrates Benchbook (to new magistrates) or its update (to sitting magistrates), the *Georgia Magistrate Court Handbook* or its supplement by Judge Wayne M. Purdom, and the *Magistrate Court Guide* by Judge Johnny W. Warren. In addition, magistrates could receive the *Georgia Law Enforcement Handbook* published by the Harrison Company. The SUSTAIN Case Management System and the Automated Fee and Fine Accounting system software are also available to judges on request.

Judicial Branch

COUNCIL OF MUNICIPAL COURT JUDGES

The Council of Municipal Court Judges (OCGA §36-32-40) was created to further the improvement of the municipal courts and the administration of justice. The council assists municipal court judges throughout the state in the execution of their duties and promotes and assists in their training.

All judges of the municipal courts are members of the council. The Executive Committee is composed of five officers and two representatives from each of the 10 judicial administrative districts. The council holds its annual meeting during its summer training conference and holds other meetings as scheduled by the president.

The council has active committees working on fiscal matters, bylaws, advisors and mentors, the quarterly newsletter, Judge of the Day program, judicial survey, judges directory, liaison to the County and Municipal Probation Advisory Council, nominating, and others.

In 1999, the Council of Municipal Court Judges was successful in obtaining state funding for council operations.

Administrative Office of the Courts

Judicial Liaison

GEORGIA MUNICIPAL COURTS TRAINING COUNCIL

The Georgia Municipal Courts Training Council (OCGA §36-32-22) prescribes minimum course requirements and training criteria for municipal court judges and supervises completion of the continuing education requirements. The council sets minimum qualifications for instructors, approves schools, keeps training records, and issues certificates of course completion. Newly-appointed or elected judges must attend a 20-hour certification course within twelve months of assuming office. All other municipal court judges must attend 12 hours of instruction annually. All pro hac vice or pro tem appointees must also be certified.

With the Institute of Continuing Judicial Education (ICJE), the training council offered two initial and nine recertification courses during fiscal year 1999. The initial certification course included the following topic areas: serious traffic offenses, caseload management and court administration, judicial ethics and discipline, professionalism, local ordinance adjudication, and criminal law and procedure.

In FY 1999, the recertification course topics included an update for non-jury traffic courts utilizing expert witnesses, speedy trial issues, local ordinances, speed detection devices, impaired drivers seminar, domestic violence specialty course, computer applications for the courts, judicial ethics and judging and humanities. There were 100 municipal court judges who attended the certification training for new judges and 315 who attended recertification courses. Judges may attend multiple courses at no extra cost on a space available basis. Courses sponsored by the training council are usually creditable as mandatory continuing legal education hours for part-time judges who practice law. Municipal court judges have the option of attending nationally-sponsored judicial training such as the annual ABA traffic seminar, National Judicial College courses, and those of the Institute for Court Management. Other ICJE training is creditable if the subject matter is relevant to the duties of a municipal court judge.

During 1999, the training council distributed a revision of the *Municipal Courts Benchbook*.

Board of Court Reporting

BOARD OF COURT REPORTING

The Board of Court Reporting (OCGA § 15-14-20) certifies and licenses all court reporters who serve the judicial branch. Court reporters may not practice in Georgia without board certification. The board, authorized by the 1974 Georgia Court Reporting Act, assists the judiciary by encouraging high standards of professionalism among reporting practitioners. The Judicial Council appoints board members, reviews the rules of the Board of Court Reporting, and sets court reporting fees.

The court reporters certification exam is a skills test in one of three methods of takedown: machine shorthand, manual shorthand, or voice writing. The board held exams twice during fiscal year 1999, testing 188 applicants. Of these, 25 became eligible for certification. The board also issued new certificates to 28 court reporters accredited by other state boards, the National Court Reporters Association, or the National Verbatim Reporters Association. Certificates for court reporters must be renewed annually. At the end of the fiscal year, 1,061 certified court reporters were officially registered with the board.

A temporary permit may be issued at the request of a sponsoring judge. A reporter working under a temporary judicial permit is restricted to the sponsor's court and may not freelance. Temporary judicial permits can be revoked by the board only with approval of the issuing judge. Board rules require reporters on temporary judicial permits to take the board exam each time it is offered until they are certified. Seven temporary judicial permits were issued in fiscal year 1999 and 17 reporters renewed existing permits.

The board investigates complaints against court reporters and takes disciplinary action when warranted. Fourteen formal complaints were filed against court reporters in fiscal year 1999. Eleven complaints were dismissed for lack of merit, one was settled through mediation, and two resulted in disciplinary hearings.

Continuing education for court reporters is mandatory. Each reporter is required to earn 10 hours of course credit per calendar year. Board rules specify penalties for delinquency in meeting training requirements, including suspension of the reporter's license. Any reporter who has been delinquent in meeting training requirements for three years must re-test to be certified.

In keeping with its charge to promote professionalism, the board enforces the Code of Professional Ethics and Guidelines for Professional Practice. The board issues advisory opinions on matters of ethical concern upon request.

Administrative Office of the Courts

Probation Advisory Council

PROBATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

During Fiscal Year 1999, the County and Municipal Probation Advisory Council continued to administer uniform professional contract standards for private providers of misdemeanor probation services. The uniform standards encompass such areas as professionalism of private probation officers, contract standards, conflicts of interest, confidentiality, registration, and training.

The council held quarterly meetings attended by representatives from the law enforcement community, county and municipal associations, private entities and state agencies.

Fiscal Year 1999 Private Probation Data:

- Registered Private Providers: **30**
- Courts Served: **Increased from 438 to 475 (8.4%)**
- Probationers: **Increased from 93,132 to 116,973 (25.6%)**
- Court-Ordered Collections:
\$53.4 million returned to municipalities and counties
- Community Service Hours: **1.5 million hours**
- Estimated Value of Community Service: **\$ 7.18 million**

State Appropriations for the Judicial Branch: Fiscal Years 1999 and 2000

Functional Budgets	1999 General Appropriation	1999 Supplemental Appropriation	1999 Amended Appropriation	2000 General Appropriation	% Change
Supreme Court	\$6,244,683	\$45,000	\$6,289,683	\$6,748,774	7.30
Court of Appeals	8,451,549	-30,000	8,421,549	10,480,565	24.45
Superior Courts					
Superior Court Judges	37,359,894	136,750	37,496,644	39,355,092	4.96
District Attorneys	27,241,824	646,994	27,888,818	31,555,174	13.15
Council of Superior Court Judges	585,915	0	585,915	594,052	1.39
Judicial Administrative Districts	1,576,573	76,000	1,652,573	1,733,421	4.89
Prosecuting Attorneys' Council	3,022,726	0	3,022,726	3,042,892	0.67
Total	69,786,932	859,744	70,646,676	76,280,631	7.97
Council of Juvenile Court Judges	1,279,908	0	1,279,908	1,323,064	3.37
Institute of Continuing Judicial Education					
Operations	660,017	35,000	695,017	719,192	4
Magistrate Courts Training Council	153,953	0	153,953	159,341	4
Municipal Courts Training Council	18,144	0	18,144	18,779	4
Total	832,114	35,000	867,114	897,312	3.48
Judicial Council					
Operations	1,929,061	10,000	1,939,061	2,319,309	19.61
Board of Court Reporting	91,626	0	91,626	93,500	2.05
Case Counting	116,500	0	116,500	116,500	0.00
Council of Magistrate Court Judges	26,750	0	26,750	25,300	-5.42
Council of Probate Court Judges	16,950	0	16,950	17,115	0.97
Council of State Court Judges	84,186	44,400	128,586	91,226	-29.05
Appellate Resource Center	500,000	0	500,000	500,000	0.00
BASICS Program	150,000	0	150,000	150,000	0.00
Council of Superior Court Clerks	40,500	0	40,500	41,000	1.23
Family Violence Commission	112,963	0	112,963	123,025	8.91
Victims of Domestic Violence	2,000,000	0	2,000,000	2,125,000	6.25
Total	5,181,499	54,400	5,235,899	5,725,000	9.34
Judicial Qualifications Commission	166,759	0	166,759	206,755	23.98
Indigent Defense Council	4,749,709	65,000	4,814,709	5,000,000	3.85
Georgia Courts Automation Commission					
Operations	2,034,106	193,000	2,227,106	2,060,921	-7.46
Computerized Information Network	741,000	0	741,000	745,995	0.67
Total	2,775,106	193,000	2,968,106	2,806,916	-5.43
Georgia Office of Dispute Resolution	270,391	0	270,391	300,510	11.14
Judicial Branch Total	\$99,738,650	\$1,222,144	\$100,960,794	\$109,769,527	8.72
Total State Appropriation	\$12,528,603,880	-	\$13,064,694,760	\$13,291,103,880	1.73

Photographs Facing Page: From top, Justices of the Supreme Court of Georgia and Judges of the Court of Appeals of Georgia at Judge Birdsong's portrait unveiling ceremony October 19, 1998. Bottom left, Judge Thelma Wyatt Cummings Moore of the Atlanta Judicial Circuit at the opening ceremonies for the Fulton County Family Court Project; Bottom right, Ms. Brenda Avera of the Gwinnett Judicial Circuit accepts the Court Program of the Year Award given by the Georgia Council of Court Administrators.



Councils and Commissions

COUNCIL OF SUPERIOR COURT JUDGES

The Council of Superior Court Judges (OCGA §15-6-34) was created in 1985 to further improvement of the superior courts and the administration of justice in Georgia. All superior court judges and retired superior court judges are eligible for council membership. In FY 1999, 176 active judges and 56 senior (retired) judges were members of the council.

The council holds two business meetings each year in conjunction with its summer and winter continuing education programs. Under the council's constitution and bylaws, an executive committee manages activities and projects. It is composed of a president, president-elect and secretary-treasurer elected by the membership, the immediate past president and the ten district administrative judges. In response to a special committee appointed to evaluate term dates for the council officers, the organization prepared to change its leader's terms from July-June to May-April to facilitate the president's planning activities.

Central office staff: 1) assist leadership in identification of policy issues, 2) promote long-range planning efforts, 3) coordinate committee activities, 4) develop bench publications and updates, 5) track legislation and oversee legislative initiatives, 6) assist in the formulation of state budgets and monitor expenditures, 7) provide legal assistance to judges assigned death penalty habeas corpus cases and 8) provide administrative support to the sentence review panels.

Standing and special committees recommend actions in the areas of fiscal administration, personnel, continuing education, courts automation, case management, compensation and retirement and court rules. Council representatives also fill appointed seats on judicial, legal or legislative panels.

The council's activities are governed by four strategic goals that were affirmed by its Long Range Planning Committee in November 1998: 1) enhanced public support for the superior court; 2) consistent, adequate resources and funding from the state level; 3) a unified trial court system; and 4) more efficient, effective use and selection of juries. During FY 1999, the council increased state funding for newly created judgeships by obtaining funds for office equipment and technology. The funds provide more equitable start-up conditions for initial judges. A budget administrator was employed to improve the development, management and analysis of the state superior court budget. Efforts were underway to partner with a private software company to produce in CD-ROM format a quick access method of searching materials used in trial. Although challenged by judges and trial attorneys opposing the concept, judges and council staff continued to participate in a working group looking at court consolidation.

Other committee activities included: provision of a web-enabled intranet to enhance communications among and between judges and personnel; preparation for a public policy study of sentencing practices; formation of a Judicial District Professionalism program in conjunction with the State Bar of Georgia to handle grievances related to professional conduct of attorneys and judges; increased compensation of senior judges serving in superior court; revisions to the Suggested Pattern Jury Instructions; development of equipment repair and replacement procedures; legislative initiatives to authorize additional state-paid law assistants and to provide permanent employee status to law assistants as a qualification for membership in the State Employee's Retirement System. Local court technology projects, such as wide-area networks and video arraignment systems, were initiated to improve superior court operations and administration.

The council approved amendments to Uniform Superior Court Rule 13.1, *Arguments: Time Limitations*; Rule 16, *Leaves of Absence*; Rule 17.2, *Attorneys Serving as Part-Time Judges*; and Rules 43.1 and 43.4 *Mandatory Continuing Judicial Education* (MCJE). Amendments to Rule 4.3, *Attorneys - Appearance, withdrawal and duties*; Withdrawal; Rule 24.2, *Financial Data Required*; Rule 31.1, *Time for Filing*; and Rule 31.6, *Notice of Intention of Defense to Present Evidence of Acts of Violence by the Victim*, were under study.

The 1999 legislative session marked the fifth year for the council's "Judge of the Day" program under which superior court judges attend legislative committee meetings and make themselves available for consultation regarding court and legal issues. The council supported the creation of additional judgeships for the Northeastern and Southwestern circuits subsequent to their recommendation by the Judicial Council of Georgia. Salary increases for superior court judges were also pursued.

Continuing education seminars for superior court judges were held in July 1998 and January 1999. (# from ICJE) judges attended the summer program and (# from ICJE) participated in the winter program. Superior court judges served as faculty for these and other seminars conducted by the Institute of Continuing Judicial Education.

Sentence Review Panel. Sentence review panels evaluate the sentences of convicted offenders to assure that a given sentence is not excessive in relation to other sentences for similar crimes. In making comparisons, the panel considers the nature of the crime and the defendant's prior criminal record. Each sentence review panel is composed of three superior court judges. Panel members, including a substitute, are appointed.

Councils and Commissions

Cases subject to panel jurisdiction are those with sentences totaling 12 or more years set by a superior court judge without a jury. Exceptions include sentences set in misdemeanor cases, murder cases where a life sentence has been applied and cases involving serious violent felonies as defined in OCGA §17-10-6.1(a). The panel may reduce or suspend sentences, but is prohibited from increasing punishments.

The panel reviews sentences upon application of a defendant. Defendants must act within 30 days of the date sentenced by the superior court judge, or after remittitur from the Court of Appeals or Supreme Court affirming that conviction, whichever occurs last. Panel orders are binding on the defendant and the superior court that imposed the sentence.

**Sentence Review Panel Caseload Summary
Fiscal Years 1994-1999**

Fiscal Year	AFFIRMATIONS			REDUCTIONS		TOTALS	
	Non-Negotiated Sentences	Negotiated Sentences	Total Affirmations	Non-Negotiated Sentences	Negotiated Sentences	Total Reviewed	Reduction Percentage
1994	851	769	1620	35	10	1665	2.70%
1995	579	280	859	50	7	916	6.22%
1996	559	295	854	7	1	862	0.93%
1997	525	321	846	36	6	888	4.73%
1998	N/A	N/A	753*	20	2	775	2.84%
1999	554	417	971	8	3	982	1.12%
TOTAL REDUCTION RATE FOR SIX-YEAR PERIOD							3.04%

On January 1, 1995, the following offenses became ineligible for review by the panel if committed on or after January 1, 1995: Aggravated Child Molestation, Aggravated Sexual Battery, Aggravated Sodomy, Armed Robbery, Kidnapping, Rape.

COUNCIL OF STATE COURT JUDGES

The Council of State Court Judges (OCGA § 15-7-26) was created to support and improve the state courts, the quality and expertise of judges, and the administration of justice.

Council policies are set by its executive committee made up of the president, president-elect, secretary, treasurer, immediate past president, and two members-at-large. The council has standing committees for strategic planning, educational programming, computers, uniform rules, and new judge training/mentoring. Central staff members assist in the organization of meetings and development of issues for committee discussions and provide research assistance.

Designated state court judges serve on judicial branch boards and committees such as the Georgia Courts Automation Commission, the Institute of Continuing Judicial Education, the Supreme Court Commission on Equality, the Supreme Court Committee on Substance Abuse and the Courts, the Georgia Municipal Association Municipal Courts Task Force, the State Bar's Bench and Bar Committee, and the Georgia Commission on Dispute Resolution.

Council business during FY 1999 included the continuing development of a study to determine the need for new state courts and additional state court judgeships. The council sponsored a "Judge of the Day" program during the legislative session. The designated judge attended committee meetings and was available to legislators to discuss ideas or concerns regarding legislation affecting the courts.

The council continued to improve its communication network by publishing a newsletter and by exploring ways to provide Internet access for all state court judges. The council also investigated ways to provide additional legal resources to judges through increased availability of computerized legal research tools.

COUNCIL OF JUVENILE COURT JUDGES

(Annual Report for Fiscal Year 1999, as required by OCGA §15-11-4)

The Council of Juvenile Court Judges is composed of all judges of the courts exercising jurisdiction over juveniles. Council membership for FY 1999 included 61 part-and full-time juvenile court judges, 47 superior court judges exercising juvenile court jurisdiction, 38 associate juvenile court judges, and 18 pro tempore judges. Four judges with senior judge and/or retired judge status are also members.

Council policies are set by the executive committee comprised of the president, president-elect, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and immediate past president. Eleven standing committees — benchbook, children with special needs, delinquent/unruly service, education/

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certification, uniform rules, legislative, grants, information systems, permanency planning, model courts, and past presidents — make recommendations to the executive committee. Designated judges are liaisons to the following agencies and departments: Council of Superior Court Judges; Department of Human Resources (Division of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse, and Division of Family and Children Services); Supreme Court Child Placement Project; Children and Youth Coordinating Council; Department of Juvenile Justice; Department of Education; Criminal Justice Coordinating Council; Georgia Court Appointed Special Advocates; Department of Labor; Indigent Defense Council, Family Violence Commission; Blue Ribbon Commission on the Judiciary; and Courts Automation Commission.

The Purchase of Services Program provides community-based services for juveniles who are adjudicated or informally adjusted delinquents or status offenders. The program is funded through a combination of federal, state, local, and private sources. The federal funds, administered by the Children and Youth Coordinating Council, are provided through a grant under the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Act of 1974. State funds are provided through a legislative appropriation to the Council of Juvenile Court Judges.

Purchase of Services Program funds enhance court services through court-sponsored counseling, educational/tutorial assistance, drug screenings, psychological evaluation, short-term residential/therapeutic programs, and community works/restitution projects. During the grant period of October 1, 1998, through September 30, 1999, 93 counties expended funds and approximately 4,520 juveniles participated in the program. A total of \$416,391.26 was reimbursed to counties during the 1998-1999 grant year.

Permanent Homes for Children (PHC) staff provide support and technical assistance to juvenile court judges and judicial citizen review panels. During FY1999, nine PHC field representatives assisted foster-care review panels in 60 counties. In those 60 counties, an estimated 19,000 children were in foster care or institutional placements. Case reviews are carried out by citizen review panels once every six months. The goal of panel reviews is to ensure timely reunification of the child with parents or legal guardian. If reunification is not an option, the panels work with the Division of Family and Children Services of DHR and other agencies on permanency options such as adoption. Approximately 1,300 trained citizen volunteers served on panels statewide during the past year. Panel members are appointed by their local juvenile court judge and trained by PHC staff. The computerized Consolidated Foster Care Child Tracking System provides information on the foster care status of deprivation cases reviewed by Citizen Foster Care Review Panels throughout the state.

COMMISSION ON EQUALITY

The Supreme Court Commission on Equality, now in its fourth year of operation, continues to implement the findings of the Supreme Court Commission on Gender Bias in the Judicial System and the Supreme Court Commission on Racial and Ethnic Bias in the Courts. The objective of the commission is to address concerns related to prejudice or bias in Georgia's court system.

The Supreme Court of Georgia has charged the commission with the following tasks:

- Formulate and propose guidelines, standards, and procedures to implement the Commission's recommendations;
- Develop appropriate mandatory judicial and legal education course materials and programs on equality, and for new judge and new lawyer orientation programs;
- Develop and participate in equality programs designed for professional and lay audiences;
- Serve as a resource to the media;
- Propose legislation needed to further the aims of the Commission;
- Facilitate a plan to educate the public about the cycle of domestic violence, resources for victims and protections available under Georgia law;
- Develop a mechanism for the processing of complaints received about judges' and lawyers' biased behaviors;
- Work with Judicial Nominating Commission to encourage men and women of minority groups to apply for appointments as judges; and
- Act as a resource to Georgia law schools in revising curricula to promote the elimination of biased conduct on the part of attorneys.

Foreign Language Interpreters. The Commission hosted an information session on the Consortium for State Court Interpreter Certification. Representatives from the National Center for State Courts, the Minnesota Supreme Court Interpreter Training and Certification Program, and the Florida Supreme Court Interpreter Advisory Workgroup discussed membership in the consortium and recommendations for building a state certification program. Interpreters, court administrators, and judges attended the symposium to discuss the current and future role of interpreters in Georgia's courts. In October 1999, the Commission received a grant from the Georgia Bar Foundation to develop a statewide certification and training program for court interpreters through membership in the Consortium for State Court Interpreter Certification.

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The Commission continues to maintain a Registry of Foreign Language Interpreters that is distributed to judges and court administrators biannually. The Registry, indexed by language, location of service, and name, is available on the Supreme Court of Georgia web page (<http://www.state.ga.us/courts/supreme/>).

The Commission is reviewing the Proposal on the Use of Interpreters for Non-English Speaking Persons, drafted by members of the Georgia Hispanic Bar Association and the Georgia Chapter of the Asian-Pacific American Bar Association. The proposal recommends guidelines and policies for training, certification, and employment of interpreters in Georgia's legal system.

Consortium of Task Forces and Commissions on Racial and Ethnic Bias in the Courts. The Consortium is a national network of service commissions who share initiatives and ideas to address bias in the judicial system. Commission on Equality representatives participated in the 11th Annual Meeting of the Consortium to showcase the work of the Commission and develop collective plans to improve the administration of justice.

Gender Fairness Strategies Project Conference. Representatives of the Commission participated in the Gender Fairness Strategies Conference sponsored by the National Association of Women Judges, National Judicial College, National Center for State Courts, American Bar Association (ABA) Commission on Women in the Profession, and National Judicial Education Program. The Conference focused on developing components to institutionalize gender fairness strategies, expanding judicial education on gender issues, assessing successful implementation strategies, and drafting action plans for each of the 14 participating states.

Bailiffs Training Video. The Commission has partnered with the Institute of Continuing Judicial Education and the Council of Superior Court Judges to create a training video for court bailiffs. The video will provide bailiffs with an orientation to courtroom procedure, a synopsis of daily tasks and responsibilities, and tools for positive interaction with diverse court users. The video will feature a roundtable discussion among bailiffs and judges, commentaries from judges and court personnel, and courtroom scenes.

Cultural Rainbows for the Next Millennium. The Commission on Equality sponsored a continuing legal education seminar at the 1999 State Bar of Georgia Annual Meeting entitled “Cultural Rainbows for the Next Millennium.” The seminar included a presentation on Georgia’s ethno-cultural population and the vital role of interpreters in the courtroom. Members of the bench and bar participated in the seminar that also featured a viewing of “Let Justice Be Done.’

National Conference on the Impact of Race and Ethnicity on the Justice System.

Representatives of the Commission attended the ABA Council on Racial and Ethnic Justice National Conference on the Impact of Race and Ethnicity on the Justice System. The conference focused on color/racial profiling, access to the justice system, and inclusiveness in the justice system. Partnerships among justice system professionals, community-based organizations, grassroots groups, business, bar associations, and educational institutions were examined.

“Let Justice Be Done” Training Video. “Let Justice Be Done” is a 40 minute video designed to raise sensitivity of judges and others in the legal community to subtle forms of gender and race-biased behavior. A teaching guide for use with the video provides issues for discussion. The video uses actors to portray judicial system personnel including police officers, court officials, lawyers, and judges in seven hypothetical scenes. The video has been presented at seminars for judges and lawyers in Georgia, and at judicial education programs in other states.

GEORGIA COMMISSION ON DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The Office of Dispute Resolution serves as staff for the Georgia Commission on Dispute Resolution. Its responsibilities include: (1) to serve as a resource for ADR education and research; (2) to provide technical assistance to new and existing court-connected programs; (3) to provide training to neutrals in courts throughout the state; (4) to implement the commission’s policies on qualifications of neutrals and quality of programs; (5) to maintain the registry of neutrals; and (6) to collect statistics and monitor program effectiveness.

ADR court-connected services are now available in 83 counties. Permanent funding for ADR programs was enacted in April, 1999 when the General Assembly authorized a filing fee surcharge to be used for funding local ADR programs. The charge is added to the filing costs for each civil action in superior, state, magistrate, and probate courts. Juvenile courts may collect supervision fees of between \$5 and \$100 for each case to support mediation programs.

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The office has provided training and technical assistance to county-level programs statewide. Grants to ADR programs are made using funds from the Georgia Bar Foundation. In FY 1999, the Georgia Office of Dispute Resolution continued to collect uniform state-wide statistics. The office completed a survey of participant satisfaction with the mediation process funded by a grant from the State Justice Institute. With data gathered from Georgia court mediation programs, a method of evaluating court-connected mediation will be devised.

SUPREME COURT COMMITTEE ON SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND THE COURTS

The charge of the Committee on Substance Abuse and the Courts is to address substance abuse issues and open dialogues that will lead to substantive policy changes for courts in dealing with drug-abusing offenders. The focus is on sophisticated case-management techniques for drug-related offenses and on innovations such as drug courts and alternative sentencing.

First Annual Statewide Drug Court Conference, 1998. On July 9-10, 1998, the Committee, along with the Georgia Association of Drug Court Professionals, sponsored a statewide training conference, "Drug Courts: Making a Difference, One Life at a Time." The conference featured information on the national drug court movement to judges, attorneys, legislators, district court administrators, treatment providers, and other professionals.

National Drug Court Week. On May 19, 1999, Gov. Barnes signed a proclamation marking National Drug Court Week, June 1-7, 1999. Members of the Georgia Association of Drug Court Professionals (GADCP) attended the signing ceremony at the state capitol, as did Chief Justice Robert Benham and Judge Walker Johnson of the Macon Judicial Circuit.

GEORGIA COMMISSION ON FAMILY VIOLENCE

The Commission carries out its mission by providing support and assistance to family violence task forces in each judicial circuit. These task forces, comprised of law enforcement, victim advocates, judges, prosecutors, medical professionals, clergy and others, work to achieve a comprehensive community response to domestic violence. Task forces conduct training, sponsor events and tackle the difficult issue of providing quality victim services while holding batterers accountable for their violent acts.

As a support to the task forces, in September 1998, the Commission held its 5th annual conference “Putting the Pieces Together: A Coordinated Response to Domestic Violence in Georgia’s Communities.” The conference featured presentations by law enforcement officers who had drawn on their personal experiences with domestic violence to address issues confronted at the local level.

The Commission worked throughout the year on a pilot project for the creation of a statewide protective order registry. This registry will be a repository for all family violence protective orders issued in the state. The registry will provide law enforcement with access to active orders when responding to domestic violence calls and give judges information on the existence and history of orders. The Protective Order Registry Steering Committee, chaired by Judge Cliff Jolliff, Juvenile Courts of the Northeastern Circuit, includes members of the Commission as well as representatives of the Georgia State Senate, Family Law Section of the Georgia Bar, Georgia Legal Services, Council of Superior Court Judges, Superior Court Clerks Association, Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, Georgia Bureau of Investigation, Administrative Office of the Courts and the Georgia Courts Automation Commission. The initial project includes a seven-county pilot phase to test methodology. The goal is for statewide implementation by 2001.

On February 11, 1999, the domestic violence and sexual assault groups gathered at the State Capitol for the “Stop Violence Against Women Rally” to increase awareness of the issue of violence against women in Georgia. Governor Roy Barnes and Attorney General Thurbert Baker were guest speakers for the event. Advocates, prosecutors, judges, medical professionals, law enforcement and clergy from around the state attended the rally and spoke with legislators throughout the day.

Councils and Commissions

GEORGIA INDIGENT DEFENSE COUNCIL

The Georgia Indigent Defense Council offers a program of legal representation and assistance in appeals and post-conviction relief; compliance; death penalty representation; juvenile advocacy; mental health advocacy and professional education. Additionally, Council lawyers represent indigent clients in cases where the death penalty is being sought or when mental health issues are involved.. The Council's 15 members are appointed by the Supreme Court of Georgia. Membership includes one lawyer from each of the 10 judicial administrative districts; three non-lawyers from the state at-large; and two county commissioners, one from a metropolitan area, the other from a non-metropolitan area.

The purposes and duties of the Council are:

- To administer funds provided by the state and federal government for local indigent defense programs;
- To recommend uniform guidelines for local programs;
- To provide technical and research assistance, clinical and training programs and other administrative services; and
- To prepare budgets, reports and management information.

The Council monitors implementation of Supreme Court guidelines for operation of local indigent defense programs. These guidelines cover appointment of counsel, eligibility determinations and criteria to qualify indigents, standards for operation of public defender offices, hiring of contract defenders, and appointed attorney fees.

During FY 1999, monetary assistance was provided to 143 counties for operation of their indigent defense programs. These grants, totaling more than \$5.3 million, were funded from state appropriations and the Clerks' & Sheriffs' Trust Account Program.

The Appellate Division offers consultation, research and advice on appellate issues and procedures to indigent defense counsel throughout the state. It also prepares and submits amicus briefs for the council on criminal law issues.

The Compliance Division focuses on improving the quality of legal defense services provided to poor people. This division works with judges, county commissioners, court administrators, and local attorneys, to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of local service delivery.

The Juvenile Advocacy Division provides support and consultation to attorneys and guardians ad litem representing children and parents. In FY 1999, the staff provided individual case consultations, conducted 9 training seminars for attorneys and volunteers in juvenile court and monitored legislation affecting juveniles.

The Mental Health Advocacy Division is a resource for attorneys and service providers who work with mentally-ill criminal defendants. This division consults on pretrial motions, strategies and interpretation of mental health information. It also represents defendants found not guilty by reason of insanity. During FY 1999, the division initiated 154 cases, closed 108 and ended with 198 open cases.

The Multi-County Public Defender Office undertakes the defense of any indigent person charged with a capital felony for which the death penalty is being sought. From January 1, 1999, through April 25, 2000, the office provided direct representation or consultative services to attorneys in 73 death penalty cases in 33 different counties. There are currently 78 death penalty cases pending at the trial level (not including those cases on direct appeal to the Georgia Supreme Court). Staff attorneys are providing direct representation in six death penalty cases (including two direct appeal cases). The office has tried eight jury cases and has appeared before the Georgia Supreme Court in six different cases since January 1, 1999.

The Professional Education Division offers seminars to attorneys accepting appointed cases. The goal is to enhance the abilities of defense attorneys to provide effective representation for indigent clients. The division publishes newsletters and the Defender Handbook Series.

GEORGIA COURTS AUTOMATION COMMISSION

The Georgia Courts Automation Commission (GCAC) is charged with defining, implementing, and administering a statewide courts automation system. The commission's strategic planning focuses on adding local courts to the statewide network and coordinating court technology to eliminate duplication of effort and reduce costs.

Child Case Plan Reporting System. The Juvenile Court Case Plan Reporting system operates pilot sites in Banks, Barrow, Ben Hill, Chatham, Clayton, Cobb, and Troup counties. The web-based database contains built-in security features and allows DFCS caseworkers to electronically enter a child's demographic information and the plan of future action for the child's case. The goal of the project is for such data to be entered and updated on the web by the caseworker. Once at court, authorized personnel may simply go to the website and print the child's case plan report. Over time, the database will contain case plans for all children adjudicated deprived by the juvenile courts.

Electronic Courtrooms. Following the demonstration projects in DeKalb and Chatham Superior Courts in FY 1999, ExhibitOne Corporation has contracted to install electronic evidence presentation equipment in trial courts in Bainbridge, Brunswick, Macon, and Valdosta.

Councils and Commissions

Additionally, equipment was installed in the courtroom of the Georgia Supreme Court. Installations include a central podium housing a projection system which displays on an overhead screen. Some also feature large screen video monitors for the gallery, and 14" monitors at the jury box, counsel tables and bench. In addition to displaying documents, photographs and x-rays, the system includes a VCR and an audio cassette player.

Electronic Filing. GCAC works with the Governor's Information Technology Policy Council, the Electronic Commerce Study Committee, and a Legal XML consortium of state and vendor representatives to develop standards for electronic filing in the courts. Pilot projects are planned to implement electronic filing in superior courts.

Georgia Jury. Georgia Jury is a jury-management software product that includes capabilities to build jury boxes, compute statistics, randomly select jurors, and print certifications, lists, summons, checks, and mailing labels. This service is currently used by some 60 superior courts. Georgia Jury provides for automated input of voter information from the Secretary of State voter registration system.

Georgia Online Network. GCAC maintains and supports the GO Network connections for courts and court personnel through a cooperative agreement with DOAS. The GO Network is now available to all superior and state courts. GCAC is working with the Georgia Superior Court Clerks Cooperative Authority to replace the GO network with Internet connectivity.

Georgia Uniform Traffic Citation System. The Georgia Uniform Traffic Citation System is available to municipal, probate, and state courts for processing traffic citations. This product has been adopted by over 70 courts handling traffic cases. The system provides for a docket, fee and fine collection and disbursement, and for electronic reporting of citations to the Department of Public Safety.

Juvenile Court Information System. GCAC continues to work with Georgia Tech Research Institute on this docket-tracking project. The developmental stage is completed, and five juvenile courts are currently trying out the system.

Probate Court Online System. This on-line system allows citizens to download to their personal computers all Georgia Probate Court Standard Forms in Word Perfect, Microsoft Word, and PDF. Users can enter data on a web-based form, print the completed form, and save it. County clerks may then retrieve the data, collect fees, assign an estate number and file the form.

Protective Order Registry. The commission is developing a system for the entry, processing, and online display of protective orders. Software is being created to authenticate and create records to be submitted to the state and National Crime Information Centers. Five superior courts agreed to be pilot sites for this project, and over 100 orders are in the new database.

Superior Court Support Staff. Technical support is provided to superior court judges through the District Court Administrators. Three computer field technicians are presently assisting the judges of south, middle, and north Georgia.

SUSTAIN. The SUSTAIN court case management software system is now installed in 28 of Georgia's superior courts, 63 other courts, and five prosecutor's offices. All courts using SUSTAIN have been converted from the DOS-based system to the Windows-based SUSTAIN Justice Edition to meet Y2K requirements as well as to provide additional capabilities.

The Washington County Superior Court was the first SUSTAIN site to report automated criminal case dispositions electronically to the Georgia Crime Information Center (GCIC). Any court using the SUSTAIN software can transmit dispositions electronically to GCIC. A warrant generation and tracking system has been developed, an accusation/indictment generation subsystem is being finalized, and an accounting module for all classes of courts is now available.

Tele-conferencing Project. GCAC is working toward providing capability for remote testimony by expert witnesses. A system is being configured for the Supreme Court in conjunction with the Office of the Clerk of the Supreme Court. A second project will allow for oral arguments from private offices and facilities, as well as from the 1400 plus sites of the Georgia Statewide Academic and Medical System (GSAMS). The system will make Supreme Court sessions available through GeorgiaNet to the public via the Internet.

Training. The commission provides funding to the Institute for Continuing Judicial Education to make training in information technology available regionally. ICJE provides tuition for court staff to take courses such as word processing, use of spread sheets, communications, and use of other office software.

Photographs Facing Page: From top left, Meriwether County Courthouse, Greenville, Georgia; Judge Dorothy Beasley (left) and Judge Anne Elizabeth Barnes hear oral arguments at the Court of Appeals of Georgia; Members of the Supreme Court Committee on Substance Abuse and the Courts joined Governor Roy Barnes and Chief Justice Robert Benham at the State Capitol on May 18, 1999, for a ceremony proclaiming observation of National Drug Court Week, June 1-7, 1999.



JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS AND ELECTIONS

July 1, 1998 to June 30, 1999

Court of Appeals

Judge Anne Elizabeth Barnes, elected for term 1/1/99 to 12/31/02

Superior Court — Elected for term 1/1/99 to 12/31/02

<i>Augusta Judicial Circuit:</i>	Judge Duncan D. Wheale
<i>Clayton Judicial Circuit:</i>	Judge Albert B. Collier
<i>Griffin Judicial Circuit:</i>	Judge Christopher C. Edwards
<i>Gwinnett Judicial Circuit:</i>	Judge Debra K. Turner
<i>Mountain Judicial Circuit:</i>	Judge James E. Cornwell
<i>Rockdale Judicial Circuit:</i>	Judge David B. Irwin

Superior Court — Appointments

<i>Gwinnett Judicial Circuit:</i>	Judge Melodie S. Conner, term 7/1/98 to 12/31/00
<i>Ocmulgee Judicial Circuit:</i>	Judge Hugh V. Wingfield, III, term 7/7/98 to 12/31/00
<i>Douglas Judicial Circuit:</i>	Judge Donald Burton Howe, Jr., term 7/8/98 to 12/31/00
<i>Stone Mtn. Judicial Circuit:</i>	Judge Anne Workman, term 7/9/98 to 12/31/00
<i>Atlanta Judicial Circuit:</i>	Judge John J. Goger, term 8/5/98 to 12/31/00
	Judge Roland Barnes, term 8/5/98 to 12/31/00
<i>Tallapoosa Judicial Circuit:</i>	Judge Michael L. Murphy, term 12/3/98 to 12/31/00

State Court — Elected for term 1/1/99 - 12/31/02

<i>Baldwin County:</i>	Judge Alan W. Thrower
<i>Bibb County:</i>	Judge William Patrick Adams
<i>Dekalb County:</i>	Judge Alvin T. Wong
<i>Gwinnett County:</i>	Judge R. Timothy Hamil
<i>Henry County:</i>	Judge Benjamin W. Studdard, III
<i>Jenkins County:</i>	Judge R.H. Reeves, III
<i>Pierce County:</i>	Judge Franklin D. Rozier, Jr.

State Court — Appointments

<i>Dekalb County:</i>	Judge Wayne Purdom, term 7/9/98 to 12/31/00
<i>Fulton County:</i>	Judge Brenda H. Cole, term 8/5/98 to 12/31/00
	Judge Henry M. Newkirk, term 8/5/98 to 12/31/00
<i>Hall County:</i>	Judge Rob Chambers, term 7/7/98 to 12/31/00

Juvenile Court — Appointments

Fulton County: Judge Nina Hickson, term 5/14/99 to 5/14/03

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